

Chemistree – LMU Study 2018

What is the **highest leverage for successful matching?** When do new things truly happen? What are the different results produced by different matching approaches regarding personality and preferences of the participants?

We have been asking ourselves these question for a long time. In the summer of 2018 we took a big step towards the answers: Just under 400 participants got in touch in order to get matched by us as part of a scientific study. In this setting, we used the opportunity to match half of the volunteers based on maximum personality overlap (ideal, according to the latest studies) and the other half based on the maximum level of differences (rather catastrophic according to latest studies). After the matched participants had met, we asked all of them about their level of satisfaction and the outcomes resulting from the meetings.

The findings of this study help us to make our matching even better and more targeted.

Setting

Our study is based on a Master's thesis at the Institute of Psychological Methods and Diagnostics at Ludwig-Maximilians-University München (LMU Munich) in collaboration with Chemistree GmbH. Work was carried out by Anna-Maria Goering, an intern at Chemistree GmbH and Masters student at the LMU Munich. The study was supervised by Dr. Felix Schönbrodt, Principal Investigator and Master Thesis Supervisor at LMU and Rosmarie Steinger, Chemistree's founder and CEO who also acted as project coordinator.

The study central's question was **“How can the matching of two individuals on the basis of personality similarities increase the positive the result of a dyadic relationship?”**

Current research emphasises the relevance of a good match between mentor and mentee, especially when it comes to personality. Meta analyses have shown a positive relationship between similarity in outlook, beliefs, values and personality and the variables instrumental and psychosocial support, as well as relationship quality. Further studies offer valuable insights into a positive connection between interpersonal attractiveness, trust as well as self-revelation and satisfaction.

The majority of mentoring studies is based on correlative data. In this present study however, two individuals were matched on the basis of personality in an experimental setting.

As part of the study, all participants were matched according to their preference regarding expanding their network and exchanging experiences. The general set-up was optimised for all participants so they felt they were also well matched regarding formal criteria.

The first 20-minute questionnaire formed the basis to find good matches. This was followed by a 30 to 60-minute face-to-face meeting, which was set up via email. Participants were able to download conversation guidelines. A second 20-minute questionnaire was used to evaluate the meeting.

Participants

The participants were given the opportunity to test, free of charge, how matching is working. They were given their individual match based on professional preferences. Participants were able to decide if they wanted to expand their network in a particular area or if they wanted to exchange ideas.



The following demographic data was collected: occupation, professional experience, academic background, gender, age and preference of time. In addition to that, participants were asked if they wanted to expand their network. Further information included exchange of interests, a possible face-to-face meeting place (based on postcode), the Big Five personality factors and motivation.

The questionnaire also asked if matching partners had met up, the duration of the meeting, if the conversation guidelines were used, feedback on the conversation guidelines, feedback on the match quality and suggestions for improving the matching process.

The dependent outcome variables were instrumental support, psychological support, relationship quality, attractiveness, trust, self-revelation, satisfaction, perceived similarities overall, perceived motives and Big Five.

Key Findings

The study resulted in the following key findings:

1. **The right setting is important for the outcome:** In the chosen setting, the majority of the outcome variables such as trust or satisfaction scored highly.

Our conclusion: The fact that a professional matching based on individual and relevant preferences in an appreciative setting was carried out apparently led to high levels of satisfaction. This is also in line with our previous experiences.

2. **The more extravert the matching partner, the more the participants feel supported when it comes to reaching their goals and personal development.**

At the same time, they rate the relationship quality higher and their matching partner as professionally and socially more attractive. Furthermore, there is an increase of trust between the partners and more information is shared.

Our conclusion: We think it is likely that this effect will lessen with long-term matches (e.g. mentoring, project supervision) and that more introvert people will start to gradually open up more.

3. **Matching on the basis of personality similarities can predict participant satisfaction.** Consequently, the closer to their personality profile participants are matched, the more satisfied they are.

Our conclusion: Similarities in personality is not a sufficient basis for a good match that will also produce good results as it merely increases satisfaction levels but not outcomes.

4. **Matching on the basis of personal preferences predicts instrumental and psychological support, as well as relationship quality.** For the matching process this means that the more participants were matched with personalities that they would like to work with, the more they are supported in reaching their goals and in their personal development and the more positive they rate the relationship quality.

Our conclusion: Satisfying people's preferences in both professional and personal criteria is the superior method for matching. This will lead to significantly better results.

Additionally, the study found that satisfying people's preferences only led to significantly better results when it comes to certain characteristics: out of the 35 personal characteristics and motives in the questionnaire, we were able to identify 11 characteristics that we now actively use as a basis for our matching processes.

In conclusion: New things happen when the right people meet and when they 'have chemistry' – with Chemistree as the match makers.